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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY North Korea

SUBJECT Notes on Living Conditions of Prisoners/Entrance of Chinese
into War/Road Fortification.PLACE ACQUIRED
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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Our imprisonment was in three periods. The first was at the beginning of the war when the North Korean government was still functioning. The second period was the chaotic era starting with the onset of Chinese troops from the north. The third period began the time the Chinese took charge of us.
2. During the first period we were under the prison authorities of the civil government. There were no medical facilities whatsoever and the food was very scarce and very poor. This lasted for about two and a half months, then in September 50 the North Korean civil government collapsed and we were taken over by the army and started north. The army was liberal with medicine and food. Then came the great crisis when UN troops were pushing up toward the Yalu and the Chinese came in. This was the period when we suffered the most damage. The UN troops had apparently encamped near Chosan. We were 40 miles west of Chosan and we tried to see if we could locate them. I was in charge of a group of women and children and sick people. I was supposed to have ox carts with which to transport them back to Mampo, 35 or 40 miles east. We had gone into the mountains and the guards had become frightened and left. I didn't have the heart to leave my little group so we went back to Chosan. Everything was stripped. There was not one person left there and no food. We unloaded and the women and children bedded down. I was afraid to go to sleep. Suddenly I heard the sound of thousands of marching feet. I saw big, healthy Chinese troops coming through, with loads of rice, guns, fresh mules, mortars, new equipment, everything it seemed. All

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told there must have been at least 20 thousand of these troops, half-running, or double-time marching, coming from the direction of the river and moving southwest. I went to look for our Korean guards and finally found them hiding in a huge wooden box. They would not come out. Later on when it began to get light the guards came out and we started to move on. We saw more of the Chinese but now in smaller detachments. They looked brand new, well organized and well disciplined and they still moved at a terrific pace. That was the first time I saw Chinese soldiers. We were first faced toward the west, then drifted back through the Chinese lines. I went right through them. We crossed over to the other side of Mampo, 100 miles eastward. Then we began on that tragic march when we had practically no drugs or medicines. From then on the Chinese took complete charge of the war. However, we were the precious trophies of the North Koreans and the Chinese allowed them to keep us under their supervision. Then in August 1952 the Chinese took us away from the North Koreans and from that time on we had good food and plenty of medicine- sulpha drugs and penicillin.

3. We were not paid at any time during our internment and until August 1952 we never knew what our allowance of food was going to be. After the death march our most usual daily ration was eight hundred grams of grain, 25 grams of oil, one gun (phonetic spelling) of vegetables.

4. On our way out in April 53, as we were coming down to Pyongyang I was impressed by the engineering skill of the Chinese in the way they had blasted holes at regular intervals in the mountains and had regular driveways into these hideouts. I couldn't see far enough in but the driveways were broad roadways with a natural camouflage of trees. Some of the hills looked like citadels. All along that road there were strong fortifications. Whole crews of armed Chinese soldiers were moving northward, making the road more solid by planting large amounts of rock in spots where the road was so low that the convoys might get bogged down. They were prepared for two-way traffic. It looked as if they were getting ready for the time when there would be no railroad.

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